

# Arthur H. McCollum

**Arthur H. McCollum** (4 August 1898 - 5 April 1964) was an **American Naval** Officer as well as a key member of the Intelligence agency in the Southwest Pacific. He was born in **Nagasaki, Japan** to two **Baptist** Missionaries. He spent several years in Japan after his graduation from the Naval Academy,<sup>[1]</sup> granting him a large amount of knowledge about East Asia and the Southwest Pacific that proved key in his interactions with Naval Intelligence.

McCollum served as an American Naval Officer and retired in 1951 as Rear Admiral and consultant after **World War II** to the Central Intelligence Group and Central Intelligence Agency.

McCollum graduated from the **U.S. Naval Academy** in 1923 and was then sent by the Navy for 3 years of study in Japan. He also attended the submarine school at the **Naval Submarine Base**. Despite the fact that he served on a wide variety of ships with the US Navy, he is most noted for his work in intelligence. He was fleet intelligence officer on the staff of Commander in Chief U. S. Fleet (1936-1938). In October 1940 as a Lt. Commander he authored what is called the **McCollum memo** outlining his assessment of German and Japanese threats to U.S. security. From Nov. 1942 to May 1945, he held 3 titles simultaneously. He held Director of Allied Naval Intelligence, Southwest Pacific, Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Seventh Fleet, and Commanding Officer of the Seventh Fleet Intelligence Center. He retired in 1951 from the US Navy. He was recalled to active duty with the CIA and retired once more in 1953.<sup>[2]</sup>

## 1 Intelligence Work

McCollum, a key figure to the **Office of Naval Intelligence**, was the chief commander of the Far East section of ONI.<sup>[3]</sup> He served on the staff of the **Commander of the U.S Pacific Fleet** as the intelligence officer from 1936 to 1938 and served several roles in intelligence from 1942 to 1945. His most notable contribution to Naval Intelligence is the Eight Action Memo or the McCollum Memo in which he provided an eight step plan to provoke Japan into attacking the United States. McCollum was also the Distribution Officer for intercepted Japanese military and diplomatic intelligence (**MAGIC**). If he thought he had something particularly interesting, McCollum would sometimes personally deliver the intel to FDR.<sup>[4]</sup>

### 1.1 Eight Action Memo

Although the United States had declared neutrality via the **Neutrality Acts**, there was a large amount of international pressure to enter the war, especially from the **British**. In response to this, **Franklin Delano Roosevelt** began searching for ways to enter the war without violating the neutrality acts. For the **European Theater**, this came in the form of the **Lend Lease Act**. However, with **Japan** expanding as a key member of the **Axis Powers** and claiming much territory in **China** and the South Pacific, there became a need to find a way to engage Japan. Still a **non-belligerent**, FDR searched for ways to provoke Japan into declaring war on the United States. Despite the growing threat of the Japanese empire to American investments in the Southwest Pacific, the American public was still largely opposed to intervention.<sup>[5]</sup> In its simplest form, the plan consisted of occupying the Southwest Pacific and embargoing trade to Japan in order to be enough of a threat to force Japan to attack. FDR implemented all eight of the steps by the end of 1941.<sup>[6]</sup>

## 2 External links

- **The McCollum Memo:The Smoking Gun of Pearl Harbor**

## 3 References

- [1] "Arthur H. McCollum (1898-1976)".
- [2] Mason, John (1986). *The Pacific War Remembered: An Oral History Collection*. Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press.
- [3] "Avoid another Pearl Harbor" (PDF). Retrieved May 13, 2015.
- [4] Tachibana, Itaru. "Itaru Tachibana | Masako and Spam Musubi". *Masako and Spam Musubi*. Wordpress. Retrieved May 18, 2015.
- [5] "The McCollum Memo". September 6, 2014. Retrieved May 14, 2015.
- [6] "The McCollum Memo: The Smoking Gun of Pearl Harbor". Retrieved May 13, 2015.

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